GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4783
ANSWERED ON:30.03.2017
Review on Overbooking by Airlines
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Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received any reports of overbooking of passengers by airlines in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government proposes to take a review on the overbooking by airlines and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission recently had asked the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to formulate a rational policy to prevent harassment of passengers left out from overbooking by airlines and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government proposes to formulate guidelines to prevent the harassment of passengers refused boarding despite having confirmed seats and presently there are no clear-cut guidelines/policy to take care of such passengers and made arrangements to book them on alternative flights in the shortest possible time and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Jayant Sinha)

(a) to (c): As an industry practice followed globally, scheduled domestic airlines do bookings, placing some limits on the number of overbooked seats with the expectation that there will be a sufficient number of cancellations or "no shows" by departure time which is generally based on the trend observed by them for cancellation of booking or no show.;
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DGCA has issued Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR), Section 3 - Air Transport, Series M, Part IV, Rev 2 titled "Facilitation to be provided to passengers by airlines due to denied boarding, cancellation of flights and delays in flights". The CAR specifies the facilitation & compensation to be provided to passenger in case of denied boarding due to overbooking.;
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(d): The Order in the matter of Revision Petition No. 2194 of 2013 between Radha Kinkari Kejriwal Vs Jet Airways (India) Limited & Ors, the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission has made general observation on airline overbooking policy and asked DGCA to hold deliberations on the issue & evolve a set of policy guidelines to prevent avoidable harassment to consumer in future.;
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(e): CAR Section 3 - Air Transport, Series M, Part IV, Rev 2 titled "Facilitation to be provided to passengers by airlines due to denied boarding, cancellation of flights and delays in flights" was first issued on 2010 and have undergone revisions in 2011 and 2016. The latest revision enhance the compensation to the passengers in cases of denied boarding in order to minimize the passenger inconvenience.;
As per the provision introduced in the latest revision of the CAR, if the boarding is denied to passengers against their will, the airline is required to arrange alternate flight that is scheduled to depart within one hour of the original schedule departure time of the initial reservation. Failing to do so, the airline shall compensate the passengers as per the applicable provisions of the CAR.